

DESCRIPTION OF A NEW SPECIES OF *ABLEPHARUS*
FROM VICTORIA, WITH CRITICAL NOTES ON
TWO OTHER AUSTRALIAN LIZARDS.

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ABLEPHARUS RHODONOIDES, sp.nov.

Snout broad, obtuse; rostral projecting. Eye incompletely surrounded with granules. Nasals large, forming a short suture behind the rostral; frontonasal much broader than long, forming a broad straight suture with the frontal; prefrontals widely separated, as long as the fronto-prefrontal suture; frontal large, longer than the frontoparietals and interparietal together, nearly as long as its distance from the nuchals, in contact with the the anterior supraoculars; three supraoculars, second largest; five supraciliaries; frontoparietals united; interparietal distinct; parietals about twice as broad as long, forming a suture behind the interparietal; three or four pairs of nuchals; five upper labials, fourth below the eye; five lower labials. Ear-opening minute, distinct. Body much elongate, scales in over sixty transverse series between axilla and groin, arranged in twenty longitudinal series; dorsals largest, laterals smallest. Two enlarged præanals. Limbs short, tridactyle, widely separated when adpressed; the fore limb shorter than the distance from the end of the snout to the ear-opening; hind limb a little shorter than the distance from the end of the snout to the shoulders; length of outer toe twice the length of the middle, four times that of the inner toe. Tail almost as long as head and body.

Colour.—Greyish above; each of the dorsal scales with a black central streak, forming four longitudinal series; a black lateral band from the nostril through the eye. Tail brownish. Under-surfaces yellowish.

Dimensions :—

Total length	...	79 mm.
Head	5 „
Width of head...		3·5 „
Body	39 „
Fore limb	4·5 „
Hind limb	9·5 „
Tail (reproduced)		35 „

Locality.—Mildura, Victoria. Two specimens obtained by favour of Rev. Walter Fielder.

Remarks.—This species is allied to *A. greyi*, Gray, by the head-scaling, but in habit resembles *A. lineatus*, Bell, and *A. muelleri*, Fischer. It differs from *A. lineatus* in head-scaling, in number of digits, and in the number of longitudinal series of body scales; and from *A. muelleri* in the head-scaling. The genus *Ablepharus* is characterised by its snake-like absence of movable eyelids; and the three species, *A. muelleri*, *A. lineatus*, and *A. rhodonoides*, show a further approach to the snake type in the reduction in size of the limbs and in the number of the digits.

It is convenient here to add remarks on two other lizards.

(1) *Ablepharus greyi*, Gray.

Within the year, Mr. H. J. McCooey obtained specimens of an *Ablepharus* in the Boggabri District, which he subsequently described in a country paper. He has been good enough to forward examples to us. They do not differ in any particular from *A. greyi*, Gray, which was first described from W. Australia, and was obtained by the Horn Expedition from the Centre. The species is thus one of those which is characteristically found in the interior regions of scanty rainfall.

(2) *Hemisphaeriodon tasmanicum*, L. & F.

After carefully examining a larger series of *Homolepida casuarinae*, D. & B., from New South Wales, and a series of examples kindly forwarded to us by Mr. A. Morton of the Hobart

Museum, we have come to the conclusion that our specimens described from the St. Clair Lake, Tasmania, in the P.L.S.N.S.W. 1893, p. 227, as *Hemisphæriodon tasmanicum*, are only among the numerous varieties of *Homolepida casuarinæ*, D. & B. Our chief reason for including the apparently new species under the genus *Hemisphæriodon* was the relatively large size of one of the teeth in each side of each jaw.

The genus *Hemisphæriodon* was separated off from *Hinnulia* in 1867 by Peters. It is still considered, and we think rightly, as distinct from *Lygosoma*, in which *Hinnulia* and *Homolepida*, with others, are included by Boulenger (B.M.C.)

The synonymy of *Homolepida casuarinæ*, D. & B., then consists of *Omolepidota casuarinæ*, Gray, *Cyclodus casuarinæ*, Dum. et Bibr., *Homolepida nigricans*, Peters, 1874, *Lygosoma muelleri*, Peters, 1878, and *Hemisphæriodon tasmanicum*, L. & F., 1891.

Hemisphæriodon is separated from *Homolepida* thus :

In *Hemisphæriodon* (1) the pterygoid bones are separated on the median line of the palate, the palatal notch extending anteriorly to an imaginary line connecting the centre of the eyes; (2) lateral teeth with rounded crowns, one on each side of each jaw enormous, the others small.

In *Homolepida* (*Omolepidota*) (1) the pterygoids are usually in contact anteriorly, the palatal notch not extending forwards to beyond the centre of the eyes; (2) the maxillary teeth conical or obtuse, subequal.

In *H. tasmanicum* (*casuarinæ*) (1) the palatal notch extends forward to the hind border of the eye; (2) lateral teeth with rounded crowns, one on each side of each jaw much larger than the others, relatively as much larger as in young *H. gerrardii*. Thus this species may be claimed on the first ground by *Homolepida* (*Lygosoma*), and on the second ground by *Hemisphæriodon*. Large individuals approach *H. gerrardii* to some extent also in habit. On the whole, pending a more satisfactory classification of the subgenera of *Lygosoma*, it is probably best to leave this variable form under the designation *Lygosoma* (*Homolepida*) *casuarinæ*.